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A LETTER from a Gentleman in the Country to his Correspondent in the City, concerning the Coronation Medal, distributed April 11. 1689.



S I R,

YOU have obliged me very much by the account you gave me of the Coronation: But I have had some Remarques from another hand, concerning the Truth of which I suspend my Judgment till you inform me better.

I shall give you the Relation in the very words, as I received it. — There was one thing which much afflicted all true *English-men*, because it is believed it never hapened since *William* the Conqueror's time; which was, that a King and Queen of *England* should make their Procession at the Coronation through a treble Rank of Armed Horse and Foot all Foreigners. It grieved us all to see, that for want of some Interpreters betwixt them and the Multitude, which usually press upon such Occasions, an infinite of the poor *English*, even well withers to the new King and Queen, were not only rudely treated with sterne Countenances and *Dutch* Curfes, but continually pushed back with the But-ends of the Soldiers Musquets, or the Serjeants Halbards, and sometimes received broken Heads, or as dangerous Bruises if they did but endeavour to get nearer: I saw my self many Persons knocked and pushed upon the Breast with the Trooper's Pistols, and pricked with their Swords for endeavouring to couch under the Horses heads; and when any one offered to get nearer through the Ranks of Horsemen, where they found Protection at former Coronations by their own Country-men; these rude Strangers were sure to check their Horses and make them Curvete or turn round, which could not be without the hazard of breaking their Legs, or Bruising those that were in the way. I need not mention the Tossing and Pushing Men and Women from Place to Place, and Dragging them through the Kennels, more like Slaves, nay Dogs, then Christians, which made many Spectators Sigh and pitty the Condition of several Hundreds whom they saw so used: Whilst others were not afraid to say, what most I believe thought, that this was but the beginning, and a light matter in comparison of what the whole Body of the *English* Nation (who are not now it seems to be Confided in) must suffer under these new *Lord-Danes* before the King can be so settled in his Throne that he may safely dismiss his Foreign Force; nay some they say had their Skulls broken and dy'd in the Crowd, though this is endeavoured to be stifled. — Neither do you mention the unlucky Qualm my Correspondent tells me the King had; nor the Duke of *Norfolk's* fall from his Horse, when he Ulhered in the Champion, which were something Ominous.

The Gold Medal you sent me, the true meaning of which you desire me to explain, gave me and some Friends of mine no small Diversion. And to deal plainly with you, I think the Contriver of it hath done their Majesties little Service.

I need not tell you that the custom of Stamping Medals (upon whose Reverses the Inaugurations, Victories, or great Achievements of Princes or Generals, were represented either expressly or by some Emblem) is as old as the first Coynage of Money by the *Grecians* and *Romans*. Nor that in the last Centry and this they have been Improved, and many Ingenious Devices invented suitable to the Noble Enterprises which were by those means to be perpetuated; and are to be found in the Repositories of Princes, or published by *Luchins* and others on that subject. Inshort, that we find even *John* of *Leyden* after he had gotten entire possession of *Munster*, and filled it with his Crew of *Anabaptists*, notwithstanding his pretended Sanctity and Mortification, Coynded several Medals, which were indeed very Ominous to him; for this *Mulshrum* King, sprung from *Holland*, continued not above six Months, before he was hung up in an Iron-Cage, with some of his Complices, upon the top of a Tower in *Munster*.

I might give you various Instances of Auspicious and Inaugural Medals, but that I intend this only as a Letter. Therefore I shall proceed to the present Medal, which, of what nature it will be, time alone must shew; yet I foresee it will give great occasion to the Malighners of our new Crowned King and Queen to pass their malicious Censures on it.

One of my Friends viewing the two Faces of the King and Queen, said, That such Conjunctions in Medals, had oftentimes proved Unfortunate; for he had, not long since, by him the Medal made for the two *Dewitts*, which much resembled this, if the Head Attire had not been different, whose inhuman Buehery by the Mobilee of *Amsterdam*, gave the very first

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rise to the then blooming Prince of *Orange's* Greatness: And all the World (says he) knows that King *Phillip* and Queen *Mary* of *England*, and King *Henry* and Queen *Mary* of *Scotland*, whose Faces and Names were joyned in their Coyns and Medals, were not very Fortunate. But I told him, since the Parliament had joyned them in the Sovereignty, they could not be disjoyned in their Coyn, and I doubted not but their Fortunes would be alike, good or bad.

When I received the Reverse, I was heated into an Indignation that any person should be so indiscreet, as to choose an Emblem upon such an occasion, so subject to mis-interpretation as this would be. For as *Julius Caesar* said to his Wife *Calphurnia*, That it was not enough that she should be Innocent, but that she ought to be so cautious in all her actions, that she should be free even from Suspicion; so ought it to be with Emblems and Medals; they ought to signifie and expresse so clearly, the Worth and Greatness of those Princes Actions which they Represent, that no sinister Interpretations might be made of them. And this Indignation was increased by the Reflection which a Gentleman made, who first look'd upon the Reverse with me.

This Gentleman seeing a Chariot, but not understanding the *Latine* Inscription, and having heard the Town talk of *Tullia*, who instigated her Husband *Tarquinius* to kill her Father *Servius Tullius*, King of the *Romans*, that he might succeed him in the Throne, and, as *Livy* says, Caused her Chariot to be driven over his mangled Body; cried out, Is this *Tullia's* Chariot? This I say shock'd me, and rais'd my anger against the Contriver, who had chosen so ill an Emblem, which upon so superficial a view, brought such an odious History into Mens minds.

Another by-stander seeing the Figure represented *Phaeton*, whom the Poets feign to have obtained leave of his Father *Phabus* to guide his Chariot for one day, and who by his want of skill to govern the Fiery Horses, had like to have set the World on Fire, had not *Jupiter* struck him dead with a Thunder-bolt; Exclaimed against the Emblem, as full of ill Omens, and said, That the People knowing that this King and Queen had, not by Permission, but by Violence, Ascended their Fathers Throne, would look upon this as his Chariot which they drive, and interpreted *Jupiter's* Thunder-bolt as a Sign of some Judgment of God impending over our Gracious Prince, for this, which he called, An unnatural Usurpation.

This made my Cheeks and Ears to burn, and I told them, they were both extremely wide of the Inventors meaning. For by *Phaeton* he meant King *James*, who by Mis-government had endangered the Destruction of this Kingdom, and that God having Compassion on his Church and People, had struck Him from His Regal Seat.

But another Gentleman then present said, That although he verily believed that was the Contrivers meaning, yet there were so many Exceptions to the congruity of that Fable with the Circumstances of King *James's* Reign, that he might as well have offered the War of the *Gyants* against *Jupiter*, as this, to represent the Inaugural Glory of our King and Queen, which ought to have been the only Subject to be considered.

He said, that *Phaeton* could never represent King *James*; since the Throne or Chariot belonged solely to Him, as Hereditary Lawful King; neither could it be said that He had asked any ones leave to Guide it. But that all Men knew an Usurper was the Moral of *Phaeton* in the Fable, and an Usurper in his Fathers Reign.

Moreover (said he) If King *JAMES* must be *Phaeton*, then King *William* must be *Jupiter* that struck Him out of His Chariot, or *Phabus* that re-assumed it after he had been Thunder-struck; and how disagreeable this was to the whole Scope of the Fable, was obvious to every School-boy that read *Ovid's Metamorphosis*. Nay, he further affirmed; That this Emblem seems to Presage King *JAMES's* Returning to His Throne again, and if so, it would be congruous in almost all its Circumstances.

I must confess Sir, I could not heartily contradict this Gentleman; but wish'd the Author had either consulted Books or Men, for a more significant and unexceptionable Emblem. But since he has been so Unfortunate, if not Malicious, if you know the Person, advise him to get himself included in the Act of Indemnity; it being a Crime, equal to the Counterfeiting the King's Coyn, to contrive a Coronation Emblem that gives such occasion of Censure and Reflection to the Male-contented, and Maligners of King *William*, our present *Phabus*, from whom we expect a Wonderful Deliverance.

April the 16th.
1689.

Sir, I am

Yours.

